

To: Doa, Maria[Doa.Maria@epa.gov]; Strauss, Linda[Strauss.Linda@epa.gov]; Dougherty, Emily[Dougherty.Emily@epa.gov]; Flattery, Priscilla[Flattery.Priscilla@epa.gov]; Cleland-Hamnett, Wendy[Cleland-Hamnett.Wendy@epa.gov]; Jones, Jim[Jones.Jim@epa.gov]; Wise, Louise[Wise.Louise@epa.gov]; Fort, Felecia[Fort.Felecia@epa.gov]
From: Gillis, Chris
Sent: Sat 1/11/2014 9:44:17 PM
Subject: RE: WSJ UPDATE: U.S. Opens Probe of West Virginia Chemical Spill

WSJ and CNN continue to give updates.

CNN about EPA: The federal Environmental Protection Agency -- which doesn't yet have an "official role" in the response -- has taken no enforcement actions against Freedom Industries during the past five years, agency spokeswoman Alisha Johnson said. <http://www.cnn.com/2014/01/09/us/west-virginia-contaminated-water/>

CNN article link to OSHA MSDS: <http://i2.cdn.turner.com/cnn/2014/images/01/10/msds.sheet.for.4-methyl-1-cyclohexanemethanol.pdf>

CNN article mentions that they are waiting for level to drop to 1ppm.

No mention of EPA OW role.

I have not heard from Allison in press office; she did not respond to Wendy's message asking if it can wait until Monday.

Just heard that environmental activist Erin Brockovich will lead an investigation into the chemical leak that contaminated the water system.

Chris (Christine) Gillis, Public Affairs Specialist

Office of Chemical Safety and Pollution Prevention

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

Room 3148D East | 202-564-0190

www.epa.gov/safepestcontrol | www.epa.gov/greenchemistry

From: Doa, Maria
Sent: Saturday, January 11, 2014 3:57 PM
To: Strauss, Linda; Gillis, Chris; Dougherty, Emily; Flattery, Priscilla; Cleland-Hamnett, Wendy; Jones, Jim; Wise, Louise; Fort, Felecia
Subject: RE: WSJ UPDATE: U.S. Opens Probe of West Virginia Chemical Spill

Linda,

Per your question in your earlier email, this chemical was reported to the CDR under TSCA section 8(a)

Maria J. Doa, Ph.D.
Director
Chemical Control Division
Office of Chemical Safety and Pollution Prevention
United States Environmental Protection Agency
1200 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20016
Tel. 202.566.0718

From: Strauss, Linda
Sent: Saturday, January 11, 2014 2:46 PM
To: Gillis, Chris; Dougherty, Emily; Flattery, Priscilla; Cleland-Hamnett, Wendy; Jones, Jim; Wise, Louise; Fort, Felecia; Doa, Maria
Subject: Re: WSJ UPDATE: U.S. Opens Probe of West Virginia Chemical Spill

On cover of Wash Post.

Don't know if we know anything about this chem -- 4-methylcyclohexane, a solvent used to process coal leaked from tank(s). State of Emergency in W.V. How sad.

Linda

From: Strauss, Linda
Sent: Friday, January 10, 2014 6:56:48 PM
To: Gillis, Chris; Dougherty, Emily; Flattery, Priscilla; Cleland-Hamnett, Wendy; Jones, Jim; Wise, Louise; Fort, Felecia
Subject: FW: WSJ UPDATE: U.S. Opens Probe of West Virginia Chemical Spill

Hi Chris.

It's not OCSPP — it's a chemical spill.

OPPT, is this a chemical regulated under TSCA? 4-methylcyclohexane methanol, which is used at preparation plants to wash coal. It may not be and we can say that.

If it is we might want to respond to this: You mention that 80,000 or so industrial chemicals in common use have not been reviewed.

(Gina's SOCMA talkers — would need to shorten)

EPA recognizes that the Toxic Substances Control Act (TSCA) needs to be updated and improved. In the mean time, we are using a multi-pronged strategy to ensure the safety of chemicals for our families and our children. We are focused on reducing risks, increasing access to information, and promoting the development and use of safer chemicals.

First, we are looking at risks for chemicals we know are hazardous—and chemicals we know people are exposed to. And we are and taking action, where warranted, to address those risks. These include chemicals that: Have known carcinogenicity; reproductive or neurotoxic effects; and are persistent or bioaccumulate in our environment—especially those used in children's products.

Second, we are increasing the accessibility and usability of chemical information. For example, we recently launched "ChemView"—an innovative online tool that gives consumers, industry and non-governmental organizations easier access to chemical information. It also allows product developers to compare chemical hazards and usage data so they can make informed decisions as they develop safer products. The ChemView site currently contains information on 1,500 chemicals—and data is continually being added.

Third, we know that safer chemical use means safer products. So we're promoting the design and use of safer chemicals. Under EPA's Design for the Environment safer product labeling program—we strive to make it easier for folks to choose safer products by certifying products that meet certain health and environmental criteria. We are working to redesign and refocus it in hopes that it becomes a much more widely-recognized and trusted symbol for safer products. We've also developed the Safer Chemicals Ingredient List to assist manufacturers by getting them quality information on safe ingredients so they can develop DfE products. We continue to add to that list of over 600 safer ingredient chemicals. These programs help families and businesses identify products that work well, are affordable, and are safer for the planet. We have some pretty innovative programs too—like our Green Chemistry Awards Program we're holding this winter. These awards incentivize and lift up innovators who are on the front lines—developing green

chemistry, products, and processes that reduce hazardous substances. Through programs like this—we are reducing waste, increasing efficiency, and helping spur the innovation that gives us a competitive edge.

From: Gillis, Chris

Sent: Friday, January 10, 2014 6:34 PM

To: Dougherty, Emily; Strauss, Linda; Jones, Jim; Wise, Louise; Jordan, William; Ellenberger, Jay; Bradbury, Steven

Subject: Fw: WSJ UPDATE: U.S. Opens Probe of West Virginia Chemical Spill

Here is article just sent to me with chemical name
Sent from BlackBerry

From: Davis, Alison

Sent: Friday, January 10, 2014 6:23:48 PM

To: Gillis, Chris

Subject: FW: WSJ UPDATE: U.S. Opens Probe of West Virginia Chemical Spill

WSJ story – let me know if you want more.

My contact info here:

Alison Davis

US EPA Office of Media Relations

Telephone number until Jan. 17: 202-564-0835

Mobile: 919-624-0872

From: Jones, Enesta
Sent: Friday, January 10, 2014 2:43 PM
To: Johnson, Alisha; Behringer, Caroline; Davis, Alison; Hull, George; Jones, Enesta
Subject: WSJ UPDATE: U.S. Opens Probe of West Virginia Chemical Spill

U.S. Opens Probe of West Virginia Chemical Spill

Public Schools, Businesses Across Several Counties Closed as Residents Told Not to Use Water

By

Kris Maher

Federal authorities launched investigations Friday into a West Virginia chemical spill that contaminated the water supply for as many as 300,000 people and closed businesses and schools in the populous heart of the state.

U.S. Attorney Booth Goodwin, whose jurisdiction overlaps the affected area, said his office has opened a criminal probe into the cause of Thursday's spill in the state capital of Charleston. The federal Occupational Safety and Health Administration is also investigating, as are state agencies, including the West Virginia Department of Environmental Protection.

Thousands of homes and businesses in Charleston and surrounding counties were told not to drink or use their tap water on Thursday after officials determined that a leak from a chemical-manufacturer storage facility on the Elk River had infiltrated a water-treatment plant. President Barack Obama issued a federal disaster declaration for the state Friday, and officials scrambled to set up water-distribution centers.

U.S. Sen. Joe Manchin said thousands of miles of water pipes will have to be cleaned out and it could take several days to return the system to normal.

The president of West Virginia American Water, the company whose distribution system was affected, said he had no timeline for determining when the water would be safe to use.

"We don't know that the water is not safe, but we can't say that it is safe," Jeff McIntyre said at a news

conference Friday morning. The company was flushing its distribution system and trying to find a standard to determine safety.

The spill of 4-methylcyclohexane methanol, which is used at preparation plants to wash coal, occurred Thursday at Freedom Industries Inc., a chemical company about a mile upriver on the Elk River from the water facility.

Jennifer Sayre, Kanawha county manager, said a few people went to hospitals complaining of symptoms such as vomiting, burning sensations and irritation, but none has been linked to the spill.

Tom Aluisse, a spokesman for the West Virginia Department of Environmental Protection, said the chemical spilled from a 40,000-gallon storage tank and breached a containment wall before flowing into the river. He said the agency believes no more than 5,000 gallons had spilled. It was unclear how much might have entered the river.

He said the agency would investigate the cause of the spill and Freedom Industries' response, including when it reported the incident to authorities. He said agency inspectors looking into the complaints from local residents Thursday first noticed the spill.

"We're still very early in the investigation," Mr. Aluisse said.

Freedom Industries said it was working with federal and state agencies, including the Coast Guard, Army Corps of Engineers and Homeland Security to take all steps necessary to fix the issue.

"Since the discovery of the leak, safety for residents in Kanawha and surrounding counties has been Freedom Industries' first priority," said company President Gary Southern. He said the company was still working Friday to determine how much of the chemical had been released.

Mr. McIntyre said the water company first became aware of a problem at about noon Thursday and realized the chemical had entered the distribution system at about 4 p.m. after detecting the substance's distinctive odor, described as smelling like licorice or coconut oil. Mr. McIntyre said the company was unfamiliar with the chemical and still gathering information on its potential toxicity.

The commercial solvent is a straw-colored, greasy liquid commonly used as a solvent for lacquers, resins, oils and waxes; an antioxidant for lubricants; and a blending agent for special textile soaps and detergents, according to federal occupational-health documents.

Its vapors irritate eyes and, spilled on the skin, can cause rashes, according to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. It doesn't easily dissolve in water and typically floats as an oily film.

In the immediate aftermath of the leak, there was no information available publicly about the levels of exposure people might encounter by breathing its vapors or drinking contaminated water.

Generally, though, several studies show that brief exposure to low levels of the chemical appears relatively harmless. Prolonged contact can cause breathing problems and trigger headaches, according to the Handbook of Toxic and Hazardous Chemical Carcinogens. Laboratory experiments with animals suggest that, when injected, high levels can damage the heart, liver and kidneys.

The water ban caused numerous disruptions to local businesses and schools. The West Virginia

Department of Education reported that public schools across several counties were closed Friday. West Virginia State University was also shut but serving as an emergency water-distribution center.

Kizmet Chandler Rogers, a member of St. Marks Episcopal Church who was coordinating water-distribution efforts there, said more than 250 people had picked up water by Friday morning. "Everyone is just kind of waiting," she said, adding that people have a "sense of relief" when they find water at the church. "They're more concerned about how long this is going to take, and if we have enough water to...sustain them if it's a long period of time."

Charleston Mayor Danny Jones said he was disappointed that water-company officials couldn't estimate when residents and businesses could begin safely using water.

"This is devastating to everyday commerce," he said. "The folks out there would like an end to this. We would like a resolution soon."

—Robert Lee Hotz, Rebecca Balhaus and Gerald F. Seib contributed to this article.

Write to Kris Maher at kris.maher@wsj.com